

1 AN ACT concerning wildlife.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
5 Illinois Hunting Heritage Protection Act.

6 Section 5. Findings. The General Assembly finds the
7 following:

8 (1) Recreational hunting is an important and
9 traditional recreational activity in which 14,000,000
10 Americans 16 years of age and older participate.

11 (2) Hunters have been and continue to be among the
12 foremost supporters of sound wildlife management and
13 conservation practices in the United States.

14 (3) Persons who hunt and organizations related to
15 hunting provide direct assistance to wildlife managers
16 and enforcement officers of federal, state, and local
17 governments.

18 (4) Purchases of hunting licenses, permits, and
19 stamps and payment of excise taxes on goods used by
20 hunters have generated billions of dollars for wildlife
21 conservation, research, and management.

22 (5) Recreational hunting is an essential component
23 of effective wildlife management, in that it is an
24 important tool for reducing conflicts between people and
25 wildlife and provides incentives for the conservation of
26 wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems on which wildlife
27 depend.

28 (6) Recreational hunting is an environmentally
29 acceptable activity that occurs and can be provided for
30 on State public lands without adverse effects on other
31 uses of that land.

1 Section 10. Definitions. For the purposes of this Act:

2 "Department" means the Department of Natural Resources.

3 "Department-managed lands" means those lands that the
4 Department owns or those lands of which the Department holds
5 management authority.

6 "Hunting" means the lawful pursuit, trapping, shooting,
7 capture, collection, or killing of wildlife or the attempt to
8 pursue, trap, shoot, capture, collect, or kill wildlife.

9 Section 15. Recreational hunting.

10 (a) Subject to valid existing rights, Department-managed
11 lands shall be open to access and use for recreational
12 hunting except as limited by the Department for reasons of
13 public safety or homeland security or as otherwise limited by
14 law.

15 (b) The Department shall exercise its authority,
16 consistent with subsection (a), in a manner to support,
17 promote, and enhance recreational hunting opportunities, to
18 the extent authorized by law. The Department is not required
19 to give preference to hunting over other uses of
20 Department-managed lands or over land or water management
21 priorities established by State law.

22 (c) Department land management decisions and actions may
23 not, to the greatest practical extent, result in any net loss
24 of land acreage available for hunting opportunities on
25 Department-managed lands that exists on the effective date of
26 this amendatory Act of the 93rd General Assembly.

27 (d) By October 1 of each year, the Governor shall submit
28 to the General Assembly a written report describing:

29 (1) the acreage administered by the Department that
30 has been closed during the previous year to recreational
31 hunting and the reasons for the closures; and

32 (2) the acreage administered by the Department that
33 was opened to recreational hunting to compensate for

1 those acerage closed under paragraph (1).

2 (e) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to compel the
3 opening to recreational hunting of national parks or national
4 monuments administered by the National Park Service.

5 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
6 becoming law.